# Washington State Library
# LSTA Five-Year Evaluation:
## *Lessons Learned and Future Directions*

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and the
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# Acknowledgements

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# Washington State Library
# Lessons Learned and Future Directions Report
# Executive Summary

As the Washington State Library (WSL) has worked to implement the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program in Washington state, seven ideals for action can be identified as exceptionally important to the success of the LSTA program. These ideals, extracted from the lessons learned and future directions section of this report, are:

- Planning
- Community input
- Communication
- Marketing
- Customer service
- Access to learning resources
- Partnerships and collaboration

**Planning**
Planning is a vital first step in any activity. Planning takes place at several levels within Washington state's LSTA program including the five-year plan, the Library Council of Washington (LCW) proposal process, and on individual projects.

Each level of planning acts as a guide to the future and involves laying out the steps and allocating available resources (staff, equipment, or fiscal) needed to achieve common goals. As planning time frames shorten, from longer range to project specific, the appropriate level of detail moves from broad to precise.

Keywords for the development of plans of all types should be focus, demonstration of progress, impact, and accountability.

Planning is important for the wise use of funds. This role is inclusive of all groups working with LSTA funding and programs, the Washington State Library Commission (WSLC), LCW, WSL staff, and other advisory committees.

**Community Input**
Community input is essential if plans are to have relevance.

The LCW has proven effective in advising the WSLC and the WSL staff and shaping library development in Washington. WSL needs to continue to use the LCW for library development planning and prioritization of the use federal of LSTA funding in Washington state.

Project advisory committees have proven effective in the planning, development, implementation, and oversight of various LSTA funded initiatives. These should be continued as they not only provide a vital source of expertise but also work to form more extensive partnerships with the library community and other community organizations.

The Washington State Library needs to continue to seek effective means of assessing the needs of the library community. Often times, this involves creating a balance between our need for information and that of the library community not to be overburdened with requests for information. Where appropriate, our assessment work should piggyback on that of other agencies/organizations (their surveys, etc.) to minimize impact on the library community.

It is very difficult to maintain awareness of the needs of the unserved and underserved population of the state. General consulting with library staff, trustees, and citizens is an important way to maintain awareness of these needs.

**Communication**
Effective communication is important among the WSL constituents, clients, and stakeholders. With the transition from LSCA to LSTA, has come the added responsibility of the WSL to increase awareness of LSTA among all libraries, to enable understanding, and to provide guidance in order to have the greatest possible impact on the citizens of Washington state.

As part of getting the message out and checking to see that it has been received and understood, WSL will continue to employ methods and technology appropriate to the various sectors of the library community, including to continue to make use of the Library Council of Washington members' connections to their constituencies.

The outcome of the careful building and maintenance of communication will be the continued growth of partnerships and effective collaboration among the members of the library community.

**Marketing**
Marketing is essential to build awareness, develop understandings, and create constituencies. The Washington State Library must effectively promote statewide initiatives/grants and keep the library community and the public aware of these accomplishments and their value. Both the "Washington State Library" and "IMLS" brands must be promoted in order to build constituency support and help citizens of Washington comprehend the added value that the agencies implementing these projects bring to the delivery of information statewide.

**Customer Service**
Customer service is crucial to any business and WSL is no exception. A client's positive experience builds the WSL reputation, increases the positive impact of marketing of the WSL services and information about LSTA programs and projects, and sets the expectation that the WSL in an important part of the state's program of service. While much consulting can be done by phone, email, videoconference, and other technological means, face-to-face contact and personalization of service is critical.

To provide effective customer service, a balance needs to be created between the need for consulting and the demands of project management. Information about LSTA programs and projects also needs to be available and convenient to access.

**Access to Learning Resources**
Libraries can build upon each others' efforts and the good work previously completed. There is a demonstrated need to share what is being learned from the implementation of projects, including the documentation of "best practices". Information about projects and programs must be made available in a consistent fashion. The "lessons learned" and "best practices" messages must be reinforced by repeating them and getting these messages in front of appropriate staff and decision-makers using a variety of methods.

**Partnerships and Collaboration**
Participation in collaboration and consortia are important ways to strengthen libraries, extend resources, and expand purchasing power.

Community partners increase the visibility of the library, knowledge of the wide variety of services available through local libraries, and make a significant impact on the community.

Partners bring new perspectives, a wider variety of expertise, increased support, and more grounding in reality. They provide project ownership, improved guidance, and increased connection with numerous people in the library's community.

Results and accomplishments related to the implementation of LSTA are detailed in the executive summary from the *Evaluation of Washington State Library's LSTA Five-Year Plan and Implementations Activities* report.

# Introduction

A letter to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) from WSL described a plan for evaluation of Washington state's LSTA program that would comply with IMLS guidelines and LSTA regulations. That letter indicated that WSL would issue an RFP to obtain an outside evaluator. The letter further stated that it was the intent of the WSL to select a person or group to conduct an independent evaluation that would lend credibility to the review and to select an evaluator that had the expertise to evaluate implementation of the program.

The evaluator was to conduct plan and policy review; review plan goals, objectives, and accomplishments; review programmatic implementation; conduct results analysis; and develop and deliver the report. The general methodology was to include use of existing data sources whenever possible. Existing data was to include information gathered from focus groups, Statewide Plan forums, surveys, annual reports, and sub-grantee reports. Existing data also included compilation of WSL LSTA funded activities including information about the Library Council of Washington (LCW) LSTA proposal process, project proposals and reports, grant guidelines, grant applications, and awards.

The development of the evaluation report actually occurred as a two-part process. The first part was the development of the general evaluation conducted by the outside reviewer. The second part was the development of a narrative covering lessons learned and future directions, developed by WSL staff and the LCW. Together, both parts would form the LSTA Five-Year Evaluation Report for Washington state.

Washington state policy requires that good faith efforts be made to use the professional expertise and services available through other public entities, such as state agencies, universities, and similar entities, prior to releasing a formal request for proposals to private individuals or organizations. In March 2001, the WSL identified several public agencies and entities with the likely expertise to complete the evaluation. Each entity was contacted as to their availability to perform these services. The description of services required was e-mailed to four entities (three departments at two universities, and one state agency). The Information School of the University of Washington was selected and an interagency agreement was formalized for the completion of services. Matthew L. Saxton, Assistant Professor within the Information School, was the principal researcher for this project. Throughout the development of the report, several graduate assistants assisted Mr. Saxton.

The evaluation was conducted using existing sources of data supplemented by meetings and interviews with WSL staff. Staff at WSL met with Information School researchers on a number of occasions answering questions, providing information, and clarifying issues about the LSTA program at WSL. Mr. Saxton met with LCW on two occasions. He presented the draft report and preliminary results at these meetings. The final report from the Information School at the University of Washington was received by WSL on February 5, 2002.

The second part of the evaluation report was the development of a narrative covering lessons learned and future program directions. This report was developed by WSL staff and LCW. The report builds upon the general evaluation report by describing in more detail the processes used to implement the LSTA program in Washington state, reviewing the existing Five-Year Plan at the objective/action plan level, summarizing feedback received on the program, and describing lessons learned and future directions.

Both reports were reviewed and accepted at the April 17, 2002 Washington State Library Commission (WSLC) meeting prior to their submittal to the IMLS.

# Overview

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) requires that LSTA funding is expended in conformance with the Act's broad goals and according to a federally approved Five-Year Plan.

In Washington state, the process for determining how the LSTA program is fashioned and how funding is utilized involves several steps. These steps include the development of plans, requests for submission of proposals, use of project level advisory committees, and solicitation of feedback.

Planning for LSTA involves the development of a broad statewide plan and then the development of a more narrowly focused LSTA five-year plan. Plans are developed in collaboration with the LCW, WSL staff, and the Washington library community. Plans are reviewed and approved by the WSLC which serves as the appointed governing board of the WSL.

Two broad statewide plans have existed during the time period covered by this evaluation. *Designing Our Future, A Statewide Plan for Washington Libraries* was originally adopted in July 1997. This plan was revised and updated during 2000/2001. Adoption of the revision occurred in September 2001. *Designing Our Future* provides the basis for the *Washington State, Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), Five-Year Plan*. The LSTA Five-Year Plan utilizes the goals contained within the Statewide Plan but is more narrowly focused to also conform to the goals of LSTA.

The *Washington State, Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), Five-Year Plan* was adopted in August 1997, and revised slightly in response to comments from the federal agency that approves plans and oversees the use of LSTA funding, the IMLS. This plan provides three major goals for the use of LSTA funding, sixteen objectives, and sixty actions. The LSTA Five-Year Evaluation report prepared by Matthew L. Saxton of the Information School of the University of Washington, discusses in detail how LSTA funds have been used in Washington state to benefit the Washington library community and the citizens of the state. A revised LSTA Five-Year Plan is currently under development for the period covering federal fiscal years 2003–2007.

The process for determining which goals, objectives, and actions are addressed in a given year has evolved during the evaluation period. Implementation during the first and second years of LSTA included activities that were carried forward from Library Services and Construction Act LSCA and also included other new activities that were proposed directly to the WSLC for approval. All activities that were proposed were in keeping with the goals, objectives, and actions contained within the Five-Year Plan.

The third through fifth years of LSTA implementation utilized a request for proposal process developed by the LCW. The proposal process was designed to solicit ideas and input from the Washington library community within the context of the overall LSTA Five-Year Plan. The LCW made recommendations to the WSLC who formally approved these proposals and allocated funding for their implementation.

Approved proposals were implemented using WSL staff acting either as project manager or as a project liaison. A member of the LCW was also typically assigned to the project. Most proposals were implemented in collaboration with a steering committee composed of members of the proposal sponsor group, other interested members of the library community, and members of community or agency partners.

Although staff has the primary responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and/or monitoring of projects, both the LCW and the WSLC receive regular reports on implementation and monitor progress over time.

Feedback on individual projects, development and implementation of plans, and other concerns or issues resulted from a variety of methods, including direct communication with customers, surveys, and focus groups.

## *Designing Our Future, A Statewide Plan for Washington Libraries*

In 1996, the Washington State Advisory Council on Libraries (WSACL) recommended to the WSLC the joint development of a long-range Statewide Plan for libraries based on the recommendations from the 1991 Washington State Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services. At this conference, over 100 delegates from around the state forged 12 recommendations to address the most critical issues facing libraries in the nineties:

1. Access For All – Remove barriers to service, reaching out and connecting all parts of the community to programs and services.

2. Basic Literacy – Serve as catalysts for community literacy partnerships in order to ensure that services meet the literacy needs of the community.

3. Fitting libraries into the information technology revolution – Work towards an electronic information network that will link state, regional, and local networks into a virtual national and international library, accessible to all. Provide for information technology within libraries, develop standards to ensure compatibility among systems, and increase information literacy among users.

4. Life-Long Learning – Encourage life-long learning by providing a neutral ground and stimulating learning opportunities. Determine programming in cooperation with local groups. Involve well-trained staff with resources sufficient to meet community needs.

5. Services to Children – Form coalitions among community, public library and school officials to remove barriers preventing all children and youth from access to library services. Implement cooperative networking of resources and enhancement of programs to provide access to relevant information in a nurturing and positive environment.

6. Information Literacy – Cooperatively provide program, services, and staff adequate to develop, support, and cultivate critical thinking and an information literate public.

7. Marketing and Competition – Educate users to available library resources such that libraries are viewed as user friendly, significant sources of information and services.

8. National Information Policy – Create a framework for national information policy encompassing issues related to libraries and information services, such as intellectual freedom, access for all, lifelong-learning, information literacy, and technology policy.

9. Organized Censorship Groups – Oppose censorship efforts by organized groups to continue protection of intellectual principles and to preserve library resources.

10. Training – Provide for the quality education of librarians and staff. Provide a coordinated education and training program which expands current programs, improves quality, and broadens access for library staff statewide.

11. Cultural Diversity – Develop and encourage cultural diversity programs in libraries and ensure a consistent message is delivered to the community about their need and value.

12. Censorship – Maintain open access to information necessary to educate a diverse population.

A Statewide Action Committee on Libraries and Information Services further investigated these recommendations and developed strategies for implementing them providing the basis for the Statewide Plan.

The Statewide Plan served two purposes. The plan would provide: 1) a mutually agreed upon plan for future development of libraries in Washington; and 2) the basis from which the details of the LSTA Five-Year Plan could be extracted.

An initial "framework document" was developed by WSACL and WSLC. The process was then expanded to gather input from library personnel and supporters around the state. Input and ideas were gathered through a series of regional forums held in Bellingham, Seattle, Olympia, Vancouver, Spokane, Yakima, and Walla Walla. A professional facilitator conducted the forums in spring 1997. A video conference was later held at several sites for the library community to review and comment on the draft Statewide Plan, to develop ideas about how the strategies could be implemented, and to suggest which groups should take the lead in implementation. The draft Statewide Plan was distributed to all forum participants as well as the larger library community for review and comment prior to a final version being forwarded to the WSLC for consideration and adoption. *Designing Our Future, A Statewide Plan for Washington Libraries*, was adopted by the WSLC on July 18, 1997.

*Designing Our Future* incorporated nine visions for library service to the people of Washington state:

1. The opportunity and ability to use library resources in the state regardless of where they as individuals live or work.

2. Improved library and information services through widespread cooperative sharing of resources.

3. Access to ideas and information in a variety of formats, balancing print and electronic resources.

4. The opportunity and ability to seek, analyze, evaluate, and use information they need.

5. Universal access to global information through the Internet and other electronic resources.

6. Customer-centered library services, facilities, programs, and materials that are responsive to community needs.

7. Equity of access regardless of culture, language, literacy level, age, ability, economics, and geography.

8. Access to information through a physical library and a "virtual" library that is electronically connected to the universe of information and knowledge.

9. Appreciation for the value of libraries, library employees, and supporters.

To achieve the vision incorporated within the Statewide Plan for Washington Libraries, six goals were adopted, stating that the Washington library community will:

1. Meet customers' needs and continuously improve customer services.

2. Improve their customers' access to library service and resources.

3. Pursue technical solutions to service challenges through a combination of statewide leadership and local efforts, as appropriate.

4. Use coalitions to develop new services, coordinate existing services, and share resources.

5.  Strive for a balance between statewide leadership and local initiative appropriate to each issue. For some issues, local leadership and solutions are appropriate; for others, statewide; for still others, leadership may be shared.

6.  Inspire a passionate interest and support for libraries.

In 2000, the LCW chose to revise *Designing Our Future* rather than conduct a new process for 2002–2007. As a result, the 2002–2007 plan builds on the initial discussions of the library community contained within the first Statewide Plan. Additional ideas, opinions, and suggestions from the library community for revision of the Statewide Plan were gathered using three methods:

1.  An electronic survey of library staff and trustees of all types of libraries was conducted from June through September 2000. This survey sought to identify what had been accomplished, what remained to be accomplished, and what new issues had come to light since the 1997 Statewide Plan was originally adopted.

2.  Four regional forums held in Edmonds, Olympia, Spokane, and Yakima during October and November 2000. These forums were intended to identify the expectations that staff and customers had for libraries in the future, the priority of each expectation, and what would need to occur for libraries to meet the highest priorities.

3.  Two interactive videoconference forums held in Bremerton, Ellensburg, Kennewick, Lacey, Mt Vernon, Vancouver, and Wenatchee held during October and November 2000. The purpose of the videoconferences was similar to the regional forums.

Over 150 people responded with comments, suggestions, and ideas through these opportunities. This plan was reviewed by LCW at various stages of development and was distributed to the library community for further comment. A recommendation for adoption was passed at the Council's July 12, 2001 meeting. The plan was adopted by the WSLC at their September 12, 2001 business meeting.

The vision for the 2002–2007 Statewide Plan is very similar to that of the 1997 Statewide Plan stating that the people of Washington will have:

1.  Customer-centered library resources, services, and facilities that are responsive to community needs.

2.  The opportunity to use library resources and services regardless of cultural background, language, literacy level, age, ability, income level, or geographic location.

3.  Access to ideas and information in a variety of formats, balancing print and electronic resources, with a focus on the most appropriate methods and mediums.

4.  Improved library and information services through widespread cooperative sharing of resources.

5.  The opportunity and ability to learn about, evaluate, and use information they need.

6.  Access to information through both physical and virtual libraries electronically connected to the universe of information and knowledge.

To achieve the vision incorporated within the Statewide Plan for Washington Libraries, four goals (1-4) and three strategies (5-7) were adopted. These state that the library community in Washington will work to:

1. Increase the ability of the people of Washington to learn how to use and access integrated online resources and services on a 24-hour basis.

2. Increase the appreciation, support, and awareness of library resources and services.

3. Increase the ability of the people of Washington to have access to library resources and services in all areas of the state.

4. Ensure that libraries of Washington have resources and services that meet the needs of all segments of their communities.

5. Coordinate, collaborate, and partner with each other and other groups for increased effectiveness.

6. Support library staff in gaining the knowledge and skill to provide quality service to their customers.

7. Have stable and adequate funding to provide effective library service.

# Washington State LSTA Five-Year Plan 1998–2002

This plan was developed in response to the planning requirement contained within the 1996 Library Services and Technology Act. It establishes goals and priorities for libraries in Washington state consistent with the purposes of the LSTA, and describes how federal funds will be used to advance library services. LSTA represented a significant departure from previous federal library programs, in that it concentrated on access to information by individuals at all types of libraries and emphasized the use of information technology to improve that access.

The development of the Statewide Plan for Libraries discussed in the previous section formed the basis for the LSTA Plan. The activities identified during the statewide forums were prioritized by WSACL and WSL staff and became the objectives supporting the LSTA plan's goals.

The vision outlined within the LSTA Five-Year Plan is the same as that incorporated within the Statewide Plan. The goals stated in the LSTA Plan relate directly to these visions, and in turn, these goals relate to the purposes of the LSTA. The goals within the LSTA Plan are:

Goal 1: The people of Washington, whatever their age, ability, culture, ethnic background, language, level of literacy, economic situation or geographic location, will have effective library service that meets their needs.

Goal 2: The people of Washington will have access to and the ability to use the wealth of electronic resources available through libraries.

Goal 3: The people of Washington will have equitable, transparent access to all resources available through libraries.

A new LSTA Five-Year Plan is currently under development and will cover the federal fiscal years 2003–2007.

# LCW Proposal Process

During the transition from LSCA to LSTA, the use and focus of advisory committees changed. WSACL was originally formed to assist in implementation of LSCA and was focused largely on the needs of public libraries. LSTA resulted in the expansion of the scope of federal library funding to more fully include all types of libraries and within Washington state resulted in a re-configuration of WSACL to better meet this expanded focus. The advisory committee was renamed the Library Council of Washington. The LCW was composed of representatives of two-year and four-year academic libraries, public libraries serving populations over 100,000 and those serving less than 100,000, special libraries, and K-12 school libraries. In addition to representation by library type, members also represented areas of expertise. The areas of expertise represented were related to information technology, rural library service, the disadvantaged, and cultural diversity. Two ex-officio members represent the WSL/LSTA program and the iSchool Library and information science education. During the second year of its operation, LCW developed a proposal process to select activities to be implemented during the following federal fiscal year.

The LCW proposal process is designed to solicit input from the Washington library community that will assist in identifying broad priorities and initiatives for the use of federal LSTA funds to meet the statewide and regional needs and opportunities of the library community. Proposals for the use of LSTA funding have included statewide initiatives targeted at specific needs, initiatives to take advantage of emerging technology or other opportunities, and initiatives that targeted a specific segment of the Washington library community and their customers. Proposals have ranged from technical assistance to the development of services and collaborative efforts to competitive grant programs. Typically, projects have been from one to four years long.

In addition to proposals conforming to the LSTA Five-Year Plan, LCW used the following six criteria for the review and selection of proposals:

1. Provides direct results to patrons;

2. Promotes use of libraries and information;

3. Promotes access to libraries;

4. Enhances visibility and public understanding of the value of libraries;

5. Promotes innovation for libraries; and

6. Encourages collaboration among libraries, across levels, and/or with other agencies and organizations. (To encourage collaborative efforts, this criteria will be given strong consideration by LCW.)

During the first three years of the proposal process, fifteen to twenty proposals have been received each year. Library staff, members of the LCW, and WSL staff have developed these proposals. Most proposals have additional sponsors from staff in other libraries. Additional sponsors may also come from partnering community organizations and agencies. This is a competitive process in the sense that there is no guarantee that any proposal will be awarded funding. Ten to fifteen proposals have typically been approved for implementation annually although several are continuation of projects that were funded in the previous year. Projects are typically approved in September prior to the start of the federal fiscal year in which the project is to begin. Ideally projects would begin in October at the start of the new federal fiscal year. Most often, federal funds are received three to four months after the start of the federal fiscal year in a December/January timeframe.

The following projects were implemented during the time period covered by LSTA or are in-progress:

Each project is listed by program title and the federal fiscal year in which funding was received.

1. Bibliostat Connect Software Purchase: 1998
2. Branch Migration: 2000
3. Community College Conspectus: 1998
4. Connectivity: 1998, 1999, 2000
5. Consumer Information: 1999
6. Continuing Education Grants: 1998, 2000, 2001, 2002
7. Digitization (Digital Images): 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
8. Early Learning (Children's): 2000, 2001, 2002
9. Electronic Reference Workshops: 2000
10. Federal program administration: 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
11. Information Literacy: 2000, 2001, 2002
12. Information Technology Literacy: 2000
13. Information Technology Support: 2000
14. Information Technology Training: 2001
15. Institutional Materials and Equipment: 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
16. IT Literacy: 1999
17. IT Operations: 1999
18. K-12: 2000, 2002
19. Library Information Technology Working Group (LITWG): 2002
20. Reference Performance Training: 2000, 2001
21. Satellite Project: 1999
22. Serving Culturally Diverse Populations (Diversity): 2000, 2001, 2002
23. Small or Rural Public, Tribal, and School Libraries Technology Institute (OpenBook): 2001
24. Special Populations: The Underserved: 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
25. Special Populations: The Unserved: 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
26. SDL: 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
27. Statewide Plan: 2000, 2001
28. Technology Support for Connectivity: 1999, 2000
29. Training: 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
30. Virtual Library: 1999
31. Virtual Reference Service: 2001, 2002
32. Washington Talking Book and Braille Library: 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002

An overview of these projects and the amount of funding associated with each is found in the accompanying LSTA Five-Year Evaluation Report. The Evaluation Report provides more in-depth analysis of two of these projects, the Connectivity project and the SDL project.

# Proposal/Project Implementation

Twenty-two separate projects have been funded since 2000 through the LCW proposal process. These projects have provided technical assistance, training, grants, and the implementation of statewide initiatives to benefit all types of libraries throughout Washington state.

Project implementation has occurred in several ways. The primary methods of staffing projects have been through assignment of permanent State Library staff and the hiring of temporary or project staff. At times, projects or portions of projects have been completed under contract with an organization or individual to perform particular functions. In cases where projects or portions of projects have been implemented under contract, a WSL staff person has been assigned to provide project oversight and liaison responsibilities to ensure that the WSL's responsibility for assuring the proper use of federal funding has been met.

Typically, major projects are developed in collaboration with a steering/advisory committee. In June 2001, thirteen advisory committees, composed of over 140 library staff or others with an interest in the successful completion of the project, were in existence. This number included the fifteen members of the LCW that represent the broad library interests of the state.

Working with a steering/advisory committee, project staff spend the start of a project in more detailed planning for project development. The project proposal outlines the overall vision for purpose, implementation, and desired outcomes. The more detailed planning process lays out more complete workplans, timelines, and identifies specific budget detail. Project start-up also identifies division of functions into project coordination (planning/implementation), staff liaison (bureaucracy/monitoring), and the identification of the performance of tasks by committee members and others.

Communications with the library community regarding projects are handled in a variety of ways and are designed to raise awareness of projects and discuss development of the project and progress toward outcomes. It is also used to assess needs, and receive input and feedback. The primary methods for communication are:

1. Mailings;

2. Electronic communication including postings to the WSL Web site, distribution of the WSL electronic newsletter to subscribers, and the use of e-mail and listserv messaging;

3. Attendance of and presentations at conferences, workshops, and other library meetings;

4. Communication to the library community through the LCW or the various project level advisory committees; and

5. Directed communications from or to individual library staff.

Projects may be of limited duration or may be designed to transition to another funding source at a certain point in time. The transition of projects to alternative funding sources has been the most difficult task in project implementation. Much planning, work, and grassroots support is needed for these efforts to be successful.

As this process for the use of LSTA funding has been implemented, a number of lessons learned have been realized and recommended future directions have been developed. These lessons learned and recommendations are presented in a later section.

# Meeting the Goals of LSTA

The LSTA Five-Year Evaluation report produced by the Information School at the University of Washington describes many of the programs that have occurred. Each program is organized under one of the three major goals of the LSTA Five-Year Plan. The evaluation report also describes the impact upon libraries and the geographic distribution of LSTA funding and grant awards throughout the state. This section of the lessons learned and future directions report provides examples of activities that were completed at the objective and action plan level. The structure and format of the plan are such that it is difficult to characterize an objective or an action as fully completed. Most objectives and actions are open-ended and continue in-progress as additional libraries or staff receive benefit from the use of LSTA funding. Very few actions have not been addressed in some manner through the use of LSTA funding. The action under Goal 3, Objective 3 that refers to the Government Information Locator Service (GILS) program in Washington state has not been addressed with LSTA State Program funding but rather has been implemented and supported with state funding. The GILS program has also utilized federal LSTA National Leadership Grants to further enhance this program in Washington state and expand the program and model into several other states.

What follows is a review of the goals, objectives, and proposed actions that are contained within the Washington State, Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), Five-Year Plan, revised October 1997, and examples of progress and results seen in meeting the objectives of that part of the plan.

**Goal 1: The people of Washington, whatever their age, ability, culture, ethnic background, language, level of literacy, economic situation or geographic location, will have effective library service that meets their needs**

- **Objective 1:** Increase the capacity of libraries to develop services which are responsive to and reflective of the diversity in their individual communities.

  - Proposed Actions
    Provide coordinated programs and grants to:
    Action 1: Assist libraries in assessing customer needs and measuring customer satisfaction.

    Action 2: Assist local public libraries to address the particular needs of their communities.

    Action 3: Develop new programs and services, and coordinate existing programs and services among libraries, and between local libraries and local agencies, that provide services to children, youth, or elders.

    Action 4: Develop new programs and services, and coordinate existing programs and services, among libraries and between local libraries and local agencies that provide services to people whose ability levels, cultural or ethnic backgrounds, language, level of literacy, economic situations, or geographic location make libraries difficult to use.

    Action 5: Provide projects that will reduce the barriers that prevent children, youth, and elders from access to library services.

    Action 6: Provide projects that will improve services to people with varying abilities, cultures, ethnic backgrounds, language, economic situations, or geographic location.

- Examples of Progress and Results

*Diversity Project*

The Diversity project began in 2000 for the purpose of assisting libraries in developing effective programs to serve diverse ethnic populations. After initial planning and organizing, the Diversity Advisory Group conducted a needs assessment survey of libraries' interest in this subject. The survey included questions related to which cultural groups were being served and what was needed to give better service to diverse populations. Based upon survey results, a series of workshops was organized to cover topics of the most interest.

The first set of four workshops, held in Everett, Moses Lake, Spokane, and Tacoma, involved training in how to do a community needs assessment. Over 120 attendees attended the training. A second round of diversity training workshops, planned for nine locations in spring 2002, will focus upon direct, across-the-desk skills for library staff meeting patrons of many cultures. The first two of the second round of workshops have occurred with 62 attendees. Currently, 226 library staff are registered for the remaining seven workshops. A tenth workshop is currently under consideration in response to continued demand for attendance. A third set of workshops to be held during summer 2002 may involve marketing of library services to diverse groups.

A diversity grant cycle for libraries to develop, enhance, and implement programs to serve diverse ethnic populations opened in 2002. This grant cycle emphasizes effective needs assessment, building community partnerships, and developing outreach programs.

*Early Learning Initiative*

The Early Learning project began in 2000 with the following goals:

1. To help libraries develop programming and services that have a positive impact on the 0-5 age group and their caregivers;

2. To help libraries develop collaborative partnerships with other professional and community groups that are providing related services; and

3. To help libraries to improve the visibility of the important role of libraries in this early age of child development

Part of the Early Learning project were two grant programs for developing effective programs and partnerships based on emerging research in brain development and the important role libraries play in the development of children from birth through age 5. Grant awards were made in 2001 and included:

1. Thirty-one libraries were awarded Early Learning Core Collection Grants consisting of 240 books and other materials. Awardees receiving the collections attended workshops at locations around the state that focused on effective use of the collections and incorporated early brain research into programming. Community partners were also invited to attend these workshops.

2. Five libraries were awarded Early Learning Demonstration (ELD) grants to develop programs geared to children in the birth-age 5 group, and their caregivers. Programs were developed and implemented in partnership with other agencies in the community. A second grant cycle is currently underway.

- **Objective 2:** Provide support for library services to populations with special needs.

  - Proposed Actions
    Through a state-administered program provide:
    Action 7: Support for library services that directly or indirectly benefit residents of state institutions.

    Action 8: Support for library services to individuals with disabilities.

    Provide coordinated programs and grants to:
    Action 9: Improve library programs that support literacy and English as a Second Language.

    Action 10: Improve library programs that address the needs of persons with disabilities.

    Action 11: Improve library programs that address the needs of persons whose primary language is other than English.

  - Examples of Progress and Results
    *Institutional Materials and Equipment*
    Library materials were purchased for the WSL branch libraries located within the Washington State Department of Corrections correctional facilities. These libraries serve the approximately 15,000 persons who make up the inmate population and the staff of these prison facilities. Reference materials, in all acceptable formats, were upgraded, as were recreational, educational non-fiction, and foreign language/large print materials. The positive impact of the material on the inmates focused on the support of institutional programs, development of Life Skills, provision of information for drug and alcohol abuse, literacy, self-help, and the productive use of time when incarcerated. These materials were especially important in light of reduction of other recreational and educational activities. The project provided materials for professional development and education for the prison staff. The project also provided materials for those staff who provide treatment and correctional programs to the inmates.

    *Washington Talking Book & Braille Library*
    The Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL) provides free library service consisting of books and magazines in alternate formats to meet the information, self-education, and recreational needs of visually impaired, blind, physically handicapped, and learning disabled residents of Washington state. To receive service, these individuals must be eligible under the criteria of the U.S. Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS). In 2001, the WTBBL had over 13,000 registered patrons within Washington state.

    *Seattle Public Library Early Learning Demonstration Grant*
    The Seattle Public Library received an ELD grant to encourage adults who have English as a second language to have literacy-based interactions with children ages birth to five. The grant allowed the library to create bilingual kits containing children's print resources, audio resources and early learning facts. The grant also allowed the library to design interactive experiences for families and childcare providers that model sharing books with young children. Staff development training to Seattle Public Library children's librarians on culturally diverse child development practices, along with instruction to improve connections within communities, was an important part of this grant.

*Tacoma Public Library Connectivity 1999 Grant*
The Tacoma Public Library received a Connectivity 1999 grant to implement the Adaptive Computers for Visually Impaired People project. This project set up adaptive workstations in five Tacoma Public Library locations providing, for the first time, access to the library's electronic resources and services for visually impaired people. Each PC workstation included a flatbed scanner and a hardware speech synthesizer. Jaws screen reading software, the MAFic screen enlargement system, and OpenBook text reader software were also installed.

*King County Library System Early Learning Demonstration Grant*
The King County Library System (KCLS) received an ELD grant. This ongoing grant allows KCLS to partner with the Puget Sound Educational Service District's Head Start (HS) and ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program) to provide multilingual story times for families. Story times are held at selected HS/ECEAP centers, with subsequent multilingual story times offered in local community libraries. Printed and audio information about library services and early literacy are being produced in selected languages. Multilingual children's literature is being purchased to enhance the existing collections.

*Yakima Valley Regional Library Early Learning Demonstration Grant*
In partnership with Yakima Neighborhood Health Services, Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic, and Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Community Services Offices, this ELD grant allows the Yakima Valley Regional Library to provide a new library service of 15-20 minute story breaks in public agency waiting rooms. Bringing this service into the community acts as a learning opportunity for young children and their parents, and acts as a portal for underserved populations into the use of traditional library services.

- **Objective 3**: Increase ability of library employees to improve their customers' abilities to seek, evaluate, and use information.

  - Proposed Actions
    Through a coordinated program, offer workshops to:
    Action 12: Enable library staff to train customers in information retrieval skills.

    Action 13: Increase the skills of library staff to provide training which addresses various ages and reflects the needs of diverse populations.

    Through a coordinated program and grants process:
    Action 14: Assist libraries to acquire and use on-site distance learning technology for library staff and customers.

    Provide coordinated programs and grants to:
    Action 15: Develop and support information literacy programs using methodologies that are tailored to diverse populations.

    Action 16: Develop an integrated program of information literacy that involves all types of libraries.

    Action 17: Coordinate existing programs and service, and the development of new programs and services, among libraries, and between local libraries and local agencies that provide information literacy.

- Examples of Progress and Results

  *Electronic Reference Workshops*
  Electronic Reference Workshops were conducted as a result of a statewide training needs assessment that took place in the spring of 1998. A series of fourteen workshops were offered to members of the Washington library community on the subject of using the Web for library reference services. One hundred fifty-eight library staff attended these workshops.

  *Information Literacy Project*
  WSL, in conjunction with the University of Washington School of Library and Information Science and others, has launched a large statewide campaign to enhance the information literacy and authentic learning of all Washington citizens, young and old alike. The project includes a train-the-trainer component, in addition to training workshops held for library personnel throughout the state. The second component of the project was planning a statewide marketing campaign to include a Web site, publicity materials, PSAs, and free billboard space.

  Starting in September 2001, the WSL Information Literacy Project began offering workshops across the state for staff from all types of libraries. These workshops are designed for any library staff involved with their customers' information needs. The workshops provide participants with a foundation of principles and practices of information literacy. Participants learn creative strategies to use in their own libraries to develop techniques and practices to enhance their customers' information skills. Participants learn how the various components of information literacy can be integrated into a variety of library learning situations and walk away with the necessary skills, methods, and activities to implement information literacy in their library environment. Four hundred thirty-four persons attended this training in 2001. Additional workshops have taken place or are scheduled in 2002. Over 100 persons have pre-registered to attend the information literacy presentation, Information Literacy – Bringing All Libraries On Board, scheduled at the OLA/WLA Joint 2002 Conference in Portland, Oregon.

  *Satellite Demonstration Project*
  The Satellite Demonstration Project was established in order to maximize the ability of public libraries to access distance learning opportunities for both staff and customers. Satellite receiver dishes and accompanying equipment were installed in ten library sites throughout the state. The sites were chosen by a preliminary survey process assessing interest and capability, followed by an application process. WSL contracted with the Washington State Department of Information Services, Interactive Technologies, to provide consultative services. Through an appropriate bid process, a vendor was chosen and the equipment was put into place.

  Selected members of the library staff were given thorough training on the use and maintenance of the equipment, as well as assistance with programming resources. The system was inaugurated on September 1, 1999, with a celebratory satellite broadcast, at which time, many staff had an opportunity to use the system.

- **Objective 4:** Maintain a support system for communities and/or regions that make a commitment to fund library services.

  - Proposed Actions
    Through a state-administered program provide:
    Action 18: Consulting and training to staff of small or rural libraries.

Action 19: Support for start-up costs for new library districts, consolidation of existing units into larger units of service, and the expansion of existing districts.

Action 20: Support for libraries to participate in coalitions and collaborative efforts with other agencies that share similar missions, for the purpose of improving library service.

- ▪ <u>Examples of Progress and Results</u>
  *OpenBook Project*
  The OpenBook project is designed to permit rural libraries to use technology to perform the fundamental tasks of organizing the library's collection and maintaining a patron database. Essentially, this is a pilot automation project. Libraries would receive technology training focused on the tasks of collection development, weeding, inventory control, cataloging via Internet MARC records, patron registration, and circulation. The software utilized for this project is the OpenBook Integrated Library System, developed by the Technology Resource Foundation (TRF). OpenBook is a full-featured library automation system developed for use by small public and school libraries. In addition, libraries participating in the pilot project will be participating in consortial activities that will increase their ability to use the OpenBook product effectively. This will create a statewide network of OpenBook users who can use their expertise and experiences to assist each other.

  Participants in this project receive on-site training, manuals, support from both TRF and WSL for the term of the project, and a workstation pre-configured with the OpenBook software and appropriate cataloging tools. Three rural public libraries and one rural school library are participating in this demonstration project.

  *Pierce County Library System Connectivity 1999 Technology Enhancement Grant*
  Pierce County Library System received a Connectivity 1999 Technology Enhancement Grant in order to ease the Milton Memorial Library transition into the Pierce County Library System. The grant allowed Pierce County Library to integrate Milton's collection and bibliographic holdings and patron files into their Dynix system, create a local area network with Windows workstations, and provide connectivity to Pierce County Library System's 1.2 million item collection, online databases, and the Internet. Milton residents experienced significant access and service improvements.

  *San Juan Island Library Phase 5 Technology Enhancement Grant*
  The San Juan Island Library received a Phase 5 Technology Enhancement grant for implementation of The Partnering through Technology project. This project extended local library services by delivering on-line resources directly to participating service organizations including the San Juan Island School District, the senior services center, and the Friday Harbor branch of Skagit Valley Community College.

  *Digital Images*
  The Digital Imaging Initiative is focused on creating opportunities for libraries to collaboratively build sustainable statewide access to digital images collections. Library staff have gained an awareness of the issues and methods necessary to successfully conduct digital projects. They have also become aware of methods to acquire funding through grants and other sources to sustain their imaging projects.

- **Objective 5:** Increase opportunities for policy makers, stakeholders, and libraries to understand the importance of providing effective library services that reflect the needs of diverse populations.

- ▪ Proposed Actions
  Through coordinated programs provide:
  Action 21: Consulting, facilitation, informational forums.

  Action 22: Opportunities to educate policy makers, stakeholders, and library staff on the importance of this goal in providing effective library services in the 21st century.

- ▪ Examples of Progress and Results
  *Workshop in Library Leadership Conference (WILL)*
  Two WILL conferences took place in 1999 and again in 2001. These conferences were aimed at library trustees, "Friends groups," and staff. Programs presented in 2001 included "Reaching New Users: Dealing with Diverse Neighborhoods" and "2000 Census: What You Can Learn from It." Seventy-six persons attended the 2001 WILL conference. Seventy-seven persons attended the 1999 WILL Conference.

  *Public Library Trustee Reference Manual*
  The Public Library Trustee Reference Manual provides an in-depth discussion of the major issues, laws, and responsibilities that library trustees will need to know about as they guide their libraries. This manual is written primarily for governing library boards of trustees and library directors, but it also may be useful to advisory library boards, Friends of Library groups, and other library supporters.

  The Reference Manual is designed to:
  - Give in-depth information about critical issues facing library trustees;
  - Provide guidance on carrying out the complex responsibilities of a board member;
  - Show examples of best practices; and
  - Supply additional resources, especially Internet Web sites, for further consultation.

  Approximately 650 copies of this manual were distributed to the public library community in Washington.

**Goal 2: The people of Washington will have access to and the ability to use the wealth of electronic resources available through libraries**

- **Objective 1:** Increase the number of libraries in the state that are electronically networked.

- ▪ Proposed Actions
  Provide coordinated programs and grants to:
  Action 23: Extend affordable connectivity to all eligible library sites.

  Action 24: Make use of existing state, regional, and local electronic infrastructure, such as the K-20 network.

  Action 25: Increase the ability of local libraries to provide their clients with electronic access to information, especially projects that address the interconnection of electronic systems.

  Action 26: Assist libraries to plan and implement electronic information networks.

- ▪ Examples of Progress and Results
  *Connectivity Project Phase 4 Off-the-Shelf Grant Cycle*
  The Phase 4 Off-the-Shelf grant cycle continued the Off-the-Shelf grant program. Phases one through three of this program were funded using LSCA funding. Phase 4 was the first phase to use LSTA funding. Each phase of the grant cycle was specifically

focused on public and/or tribal libraries. The Phase 4 Off-the-Shelf grant cycle continued to work toward the goal that every Washingtonian shall have graphical access to electronic resources at their public library. The grant cycle provided a non-competitive opportunity for qualifying public and tribal libraries to receive Windows NT public access Internet workstations, as well as assistance with installation, set-up, and training. As part of Phase 4, twelve libraries received a total of twenty graphical public access workstations.

*K-20 Project*
The purpose of the K-20 project is to bring Washington public libraries into the successful K-20 network. Washington's K-20 network currently provides school and educational institutions with fast and reliable telecommunication lines and an Internet Service Provider. During FFY01, the K-20 project for libraries awaited a decision from the K-20 governing board that would allow WSL to work with local libraries to begin connecting them to the network. WSL staff worked with Department of Information Services personnel to lay the groundwork for K-20 implementation. In October 2001, the K-20 board granted spending authority that allowed the project to start to move forward. For FFY02, the K-20 project will move ahead rapidly and the LSTA funds allotted for the project will be spent on WSL staff conducting pre-installation site visits and purchasing and installing upgrades of hardware and software.

*Gates Foundation State Partnership Program*
WSL staff worked with the Gates Foundation to begin the Gates Foundation State Partnership Program in Washington state. The statewide application was completed and approved. WSL staff also worked with Gates Foundation staff to coordinate the application process with local libraries and provide secondary support to libraries completing applications for the Gates computer packages.

*Morton School District Phase 5 Technology Enhancement Grant*
The Morton School District received a Phase 5 Technology Enhancement grant to replace aging computer equipment and automate additional school libraries. The economically depressed communities of Morton and Mineral do not have access to a public library system. Technology enhancement funding helped to offset this disadvantage by providing a means to upgrade the Morton High School Library automation system to a Y2K compatible system and purchase automation systems for Morton and Mineral Elementary libraries. The proposed systems enabled patrons to search the collection from both home and classroom.

*IT Consulting*
WSL IT consultants have worked with numerous public libraries to plan and implement networks within and among library buildings. This expertise provided these libraries with a cost-effective method of planning and implementing these systems. Many times, rural communities do not have access to local expertise in this field or do not have access to the expertise at a cost affordable to the library.

- **Objective 2:** Increase the number of libraries which are consistently upgrading their information technology.

  - Proposed Actions
    Provide coordinated programs and grants to:
    Action 27: Enable consulting and technical assistance on technology planning.

    Action 28: Promote standards-based solutions and continued development and re-assessment of standards.

Action 29: Promote opportunities for "research and development."

Action 30: Increase the ability of local libraries to provide their clients with electronic access to information, including projects that address the interconnection of electronic systems.

Action 31: Assist libraries to plan and implement electronic information networks.

- <u>Examples of Progress and Results</u>
*E-Rate Support and Assistance*
WSL IT consulting staff worked with many public libraries throughout Washington to develop basic technology plans that would satisfy E-Rate technology planning requirements. These plans introduced the smallest of these libraries to the concepts and processes required for maintaining effective computing and network services.

*Connectivity 2000 Search and Development Phase Grant Cycle*
The Connectivity 2000 grant cycle was intended to assist libraries in their efforts to provide their customers electronic access to a variety of library services. One phase of this grant cycle focused on research and modeling of emerging technologies for the provision of library services. Examples of emerging technologies included, but were not limited to, streaming video and audio, IP phones, e-commerce applications, and wireless technologies. Four research and development phase grants were awarded to libraries for the following purposes:

1. Development of a wireless training lab that can be more easily transported to the branch lab for training sessions at that additional location;

2. Researching the potential for installing digital cellular modem service to establish network connectivity for the library system's two bookmobiles;

3. Providing a wireless public Internet access workstation for use in a bookmobile; and

4. Providing reference centers within a library district public Internet access touch screen workstations.

*Statewide Virtual Reference Service Project*
The Statewide Virtual Reference Service Project is focused on the development of best practices, methods, and standards for creating virtual reference services in Washington state libraries. The Virtual Reference Project will be developed in partnership with libraries of the state, thereby providing a demonstration of best practices to support wide availability of electronic reference and the opportunity for cost savings to all involved.

*Fort Vancouver Regional Library Connectivity 2000 Plus Grant*
Fort Vancouver Regional Library District (FVRL) received a grant to support FVRL's participation in iNet, a cooperative project with other local government agencies to deploy a fiberoptic Gigabit Ethernet backbone throughout Clark County. Specifically, this funding purchased the hardware required to link seven library branches and FVRL administrative offices to iNet, significantly expanding bandwidth.

*Castle Rock School District Connectivity 2000 Plus Grant*
The focus of "Connections for Learning" was to improve student learning in the middle grades (6-8) by expanding research capabilities, providing electronic access to current learning resources, creating an electronic catalog of the library's collection to allow

targeted inventory purchases, and enhancing the presentation of information. The proposal had three major components:

1. Provision of four Internet-ready computer workstations for student research;

2. Automation of library services, and

3. Provision of state-of-the-art presentation tools.

*Roslyn Public Library Connectivity 1999 Technology Enhancement Grant*
The Roslyn Library established a Virtual Library computer station with Internet access to meet the reference and research needs of their customers. The existing computer station was busy throughout open hours and usually unavailable for lengthy research or quick reference. The library's limited budget rendered them unable to maintain a print reference collection. The Virtual Library was used to provide online reference and research for patrons, on their own and using the library's staff.

- **Objective 3**: Increase the number of libraries that are able to take advantage of the telecommunications discounts.

  - Proposed Actions
    Provide coordinated programs and offer workshops to support:
    Action 32: Telecommunications planning and negotiating for telecommunications services.

    Action 33: Negotiation of favorable telecommunication discount rates for libraries.

    Action 34: Negotiation with regional and local vendors for telecommunication services and favorable discount rates.

  - Examples of Progress and Results
    *Information Technology Consulting*
    WSL IT Consultants worked with local libraries to take full use of available E-Rate assistance and support. WSL IT Consultants also worked with local libraries on implementation of the K-20 network project for public libraries. The implementation of this project will result in lower telecom bills for many broadband library customers and in some instances will provide broadband service to libraries for less than the cost of maintaining the several existing dial-up connections.

    WSL IT Consultants worked with the Washington State Department of Information Services to complete a statewide K20 E-Rate application that provides consortial discounts to participating libraries.

    As part of the K-20 networking project, WSL IT Consultants worked with vendors, the K-20 network board and local libraries to determine the best selection of services at the most cost-effective rates.

- **Objective 4:** Increase the availability of licensed databases.

  - Proposed Actions
    Provide coordinated programs and grants to:
    Action 35: Facilitate coordination of needs assessment among libraries.

Action 36: Initiate support for securing favorable rates for cooperative licensing of commercial products.

Action 37: Increase libraries' ability to provide their clients with electronic access to information and document delivery.

Action 38: Assist libraries to plan and implement electronic information networks.

- ▪ Examples of Progress and Results
  *Statewide Database Licensing Program*
  Contracted with University of Washington to assess the impact of centralized, cooperative purchasing among Washington's non-profit library community which produced "A Study of the Impact of Statewide Database Licensing on Information Provision in the State of Washington," SDL Project staff worked with the Washington Public Libraries Cooperate! group and the Washington Medical Library Association to obtain licenses to databases not available as part of the SDL contract, conducted database trials during which Washington libraries could become familiar with a wide variety of databases and express interest in purchasing licenses to these databases, and produced a promotional video and marketing kit. Distributed widely throughout the Washington library community the video and marketing kit encouraged libraries to use the databases available through SDL and market themselves to their communities.

  *Bibliographic Center for Research (BCR) Membership*
  In January 2001, WSL joined other western state libraries in purchasing memberships to the Bibliographic Center for Research (BCR). WSL's membership allows individual Washington libraries to participate in multi-state purchases of databases, supplies, and training without paying individual memberships.

- **Objective 5:** Increase libraries' access to technical training and support for electronic access.

  - ▪ Proposed Actions
    Provide coordinated programs and grants to support:
    Action 39: Consulting and technical assistance in electronic access for libraries.

    Action 40: Sharing of existing knowledge in the state.

    Action 41: Coordination of existing programs and services, and the development of new programs and services among libraries and between local libraries and local agencies with shared missions.

  - ▪ Examples of Progress and Results
    *Information Technology Training*
    The increased demand for IT resources in Washington libraries, as well as the rapidly changing IT environment, places increased demand on library staff. The training required is expensive and in generic information technology fields of networks, workstation, and server support, rather than typical library specialties. Training as a group provides a cost-effective model and allows some tailoring to meet library needs. Funding in this area allows additional training opportunities to increase the information technology literacy of library staff.

    Goals:
    1. Leverage increased buying power to decrease the cost of acquiring technical training for library IT staff;

2. Increase the number of certified professional IT staff in the Washington state libraries; and

3. Increase the overall literacy of library staff on IT subjects

There are currently two programs that provide IT training opportunities:

1. Training for IT professionals is designed for staff providing computer, network, application, and Web support at libraries.

2. Computer skills training for library staff is designed for library staff to increase their computer skills and make them an asset for other library staff in providing computer application assistance.

*Digital Imaging Initiative*
One result of the Digital Imaging Initiative was the creation of the Washington Digital Library Portal Web site. This portal features links to two different types of Web sites. The Washington State Collections Web site provides convenient access for Washington residents to digital library collections published by Washington state libraries. The Digital Best Practices Web site offers a practical, detailed presentation of best practices and methods for creating digital collections. Each topic paper discusses issues and techniques relating to digital publishing of heritage resources. This interactive Web site will guide staff of libraries and heritage organizations to plan, develop, and implement a digital imaging project. The Web site uses a variety of presentation tools, including interactive pages, links, graphics, and text to present the information. The site offers both information and training options to staff of libraries, museums, and heritage organizations.

*Library Information Technology Working Group (LITWG)*
LITWG presents workshops and forums that provide a venue by which often isolated IT practitioners may come together as a community to introduce, discuss, and analyze new technologies and the impact of these on the library community. Through these gatherings, participants are empowered to share their unique experiences and puzzle through common challenges. WSL in cooperation with LITWG has presented a number of scheduled workshops on various topics across the state. Over the past three years, workshops have been presented in Tacoma, Vancouver, Tri-Cities, Yakima, Spokane, and Everett. Topics have included Connectivity, Network Security, Web Technologies, Web Rapid Application Development, Intranet Technology, Wireless Networking, Filtering, and Thin-client Technology. Over 325 IT staff have attended these workshops.

- **Objective 6:** Increase the ability of library employees to ensure that staff are consistently updated in the effective uses of library technology, including the electronic delivery of services.

  - Proposed Actions
    Provide coordinated programs and grants to:
    Action 42: Assist libraries to acquire and use on-site distance learning technology for library staff and customers.

    Action 43: Provide consultation, information, and referral services that will enable the staff of small libraries to use information technology solutions to enhance services to their customers.

Action 44: Provide an information center or clearinghouse on the uses of library information technology within Washington state.

Action 45: Provide training opportunities in library technology and the electronic delivery of services.

Action 46: Provide opportunities to share existing knowledge within the state.

- <u>Examples of Progress and Results</u>
  *Satellite Demonstration Project*
  In order to maximize the ability of public libraries to access distance learning opportunities for both staff and customers, satellite receiver dishes and accompanying equipment were established in ten library sites throughout the state. The sites were chosen by a preliminary survey process assessing interest and capability, followed by an application process. WSL contracted with the Washington State Department of Information Services, Interactive Technologies, to provide consultative services. Through an appropriate bid process, a vendor was chosen and the equipment was put into place.

  Selected members of the library staff were given thorough training on the use and maintenance of the equipment, as well as assistance with programming resources. The system was inaugurated on September 1, 1999, with a celebratory satellite broadcast at which time many staff had an opportunity to use the system.

  *Information Technology Support Project*
  During past grant cycles, the Connectivity Project provided valuable computing technical assistance to libraries in terms of workstation support, network design, and technology plan development. Additionally, training in Web technologies and effective use of Web capabilities was provided by the training position. The Information Technology Support project continued this support, specifically to small and medium libraries. The project was critical to the continued increase of digital resources in Washington libraries. Technology assistance to libraries, especially in rural areas, is extremely important to the continued development of access to electronic resources. Without this project, the gap between the have and have-not would continue to grow.

  *IT Literacy Project*
  The IT Literacy project provided funding for various activities within the IT community. The project provided for dissemination of new information, research, and the development of an agreed upon standards to assist in addressing IT issues and problems. Funding supported LITWG, IT forums, IT issues, research and development of groups, special forums on Web development, Web searching, networking technology, and other IT issues.

  *eServices for LSTA Eligible Libraries*
  WSL provides free Web services to LSTA eligible libraries. These Web services are focused toward small and medium size libraries, in order to assist them as they move into the world of Web technologies or to expand service offerings. The intent it to augment, not to compete with local Information Service Providers (ISPs).

  The goals for these WSL Web services are to:

  1. Provide libraries the capability to expand their Internet service offerings;

  2. Provide libraries with a way to evaluate local need and demand, as well as service effectiveness;

3. Help libraries acquire data to make business decisions; and then be able to

4. Determine how and when to establish an Internet site, based on operational knowledge of equipment, connections, and technical support that will be needed.

WSL Web services include: web hosting, Cold Fusion Server 5.0 for application development, HyperText Markup Language (HTML) compliant, Common Gateway Interface (CGI) directory access, electronic mail and mailing lists, access to MS-Structured Query Language Databases (MSSQL), web discussion areas and chatrooms for library and community use, calendar capabilities for library/ community events, and surveyor for completing on-line surveys.

*Statewide Virtual Reference Service Project*
The Statewide Virtual Reference Project is developing a training curriculum for electronic reference service for delivery via interactive chat software to remote locations.

- **Objective 7:** Increase opportunities for policy makers, stakeholders and libraries to understand the importance of electronic resources in the effective delivery of library services.

  - Proposed Actions
    Through coordinated programs provide:
    Action 47: Consulting, facilitation, and informational forums.

    Action 48: Opportunities to educate policy makers, stakeholders, and library staff on the importance of this goal in providing effective library services in the 21st century.

  - Examples of Progress and Results
    *Workshop in Library Leadership (WILL)*
    WILL '01, a conference aimed at library trustees, friends, and staff presented three programs on library technology, electronic marketing, and online training, and new audio formats.

**Goal 3: The people of Washington will have equitable, seamless access to all resources available through libraries**

- **Objective 1:** Increase the number of libraries which use coalitions to develop new services, coordinate existing services, and share resources.

  - Proposed Actions
    Provide coordinated programs and grants to support:
    Action 49: Identifying and pursuing strategies that leverage buying power.

    Action 50: Assisting libraries to form coalitions and collaborative efforts with other entities.

    Action 51: Coordinating and facilitating collaborative development efforts with appropriate public agencies and private businesses, in order to advance the state of IT for Washington's library community.

- Examples of Progress and Results
  *Statewide Database Licensing Program*
  The SDL program provided a method for all types of libraries to collaborate on the purchase of licensed databases. It is estimated that these purchases have saved Washington libraries approximately $8,300,000 over the life of the vendor contract. In 2001, approximately 98% of public libraries (65 of 66) participated in the project and 94% of community and technical college libraries (31 of 33) participated in the project. All 9 educational service districts (ESD) participated and most school library media centers participated through their ESDs. In addition, numerous medical libraries, tribal libraries, and libraries within private colleges participated.

  Optional contracts have been negotiated from several vendors to provide other database licensing packages. Five optional packages have been negotiated for: medical libraries and universities (OVID journal collection); public libraries (ProQuest Genealogy and Local History database package and the Gale Public Library Package); and all library types (OCLC FirstSearch and also Reference USA).

  *Statewide Virtual Reference Service Project*
  The Statewide Virtual Reference Project funds demonstration projects for cooperative delivery of electronic reference service through grant cycles in 2002.

  *Community College Conspectus Project*
  The Community College Conspectus project was a collaborative effort by thirty-two community colleges throughout the state to assess the breadth and depth of collection strength through the use of comparative measures. LSTA funds ($30,000) supplemented other monies provided through the community college system. This collection analysis project provided information that was required for further planning in the areas of resource sharing, interlibrary loan services, and collection management.

  *Consumer Information Project*
  The Find-It! Consumer project was a collaborative effort of state organization sponsors and library staff to make useful, quality consumer information easily available to the public. Find-It! Consumer is a Web site search engine that provides a single stop for searching more than 100 consumer protection and public safety Web sites. This effort was initiated as a result of library staff and directors from around the state expressing a need on behalf of the public for consumer information which is easily accessible, accurate, timely, and of high quality. Approximately 100,000 visits to the Find-It! Consumer website occurred during the period January 3, 2001 through September 14, 2001.

- **Objective 2:** Increase the number of unique local resources available electronically to people across Washington state.

  - Proposed Actions
    Provide coordinated programs and grants to support:
    Action 52: Projects that increase the ability of local libraries to provide their clients with electronic access to information, including projects that address the interconnection of electronic systems.

    Action 53: Projects providing for the addition of unique local resources that are electronically accessible.
    The SDL project allows academic libraries, public libraries, school libraries, special libraries and tribal libraries access to over 1,500 journals and magazines, including access to major Washington newspapers.

- Examples of Progress and Results
  *Digital Images Grant Cycles*
  In 2000 and 2001, the Digital Imaging project awarded 15 grants worth approximately $609,000 to libraries within Washington state. These grants allowed libraries to partner with other libraries or heritage organizations to digitize important collections and explore and provide ways to make these collections available electronically.

  *Statewide Virtual Reference Service Project*
  The Statewide Virtual Reference Project coordinates testing and evaluation of a cooperative system provided by OCLC and shared by eight multitype libraries in separate geographic locations to provide tiered electronic reference service.

- **Objective 3:** Increase the points of access to government information.

  - Proposed Actions
    Provide coordinated programs and grants to support:
    Action 54: Training opportunities in retrieval of government information.

    Action 55: Consistent production of government information.

    Action 56: Access to local government information using the GILS standards.

    Action 57: Assistance to libraries to plan and implement electronic information networks.

    Action 58: The ability of local libraries to provide their clients with electronic access to information, including projects that address the interconnection of electronic systems.

  - Examples of Progress and Results
    *Electronic Reference Workshops*
    Fourteen electronic reference workshops provided training to 158 library staff throughout Washington state. These workshops focused on the use of the Web for library reference service.

    *Information Literacy Project*
    The Information Literacy Project provided training for 434 library staff and additional workshops are continuing in 2002. These workshops focused on teaching information literacy skills to library patrons and customers, and other library staff.

    *Virtual Library Project*
    Using LSTA funding, WSL has provided a variety of assistance to libraries to help them bring content to customers. The Virtual Library project assisted libraries in developing:

    1. Content – information of value to customers including on-line information, library catalogs, digitized information, and/or other materials;

    2. Connectivity – the ability of customers to access content information including Web access to that content; and

    3. Service centers – facilities designed to host virtual library services.

The Virtual Library Service Center provided the following services to LSTA eligible libraries, with priority to libraries with limited information technology support or Internet access:

1. Web page hosting;

2. Common Web page development tool set;

3. Web accessible database development hosting and common tool set;

4. Mailing list services;

5. Hosting of Web accessible customer service applications;

6. Access to the Libraries of Washington State Information System; and

7. Hosting of Washington Libraries On-Line.

*Technology Planning Assistance*
As part of WSL's E-Rate support and as part of Connectivity grant cycles, technology plans were a required submittal for each activity. All public libraries submitted technology plans to WSL for approval as part of the E-Rate application process. Documentation of technology planning was required for other library types participating in Connectivity grant cycles. Templates for the development of technology plans for the purpose of satisfying E-Rate and Connectivity requirements were available through WSL. Technical assistance in developing plans and identifying IT issues and solutions was available from WSL technology consultants.

*Connectivity Project*
From 1998–2001, the Connectivity project awarded 69 grants worth approximately $1,845,000 to libraries within Washington state. The grants provided enhanced connectivity and significantly increased the number of public access workstations in libraries awarded funding.

*K-20 Project*
The K-20 network project will allow public libraries to connect to Washington state's K-20 broadband backbone. LSTA funds are being used to provide technical support during this transition.

*Gates Foundation State Partnership Program*
The Gates Foundation is now awarding equipment grants in Washington to public libraries. A small amount of LSTA funding is being used to provide assistance to public libraries working through this process. These funds allowed WSL staff to explore and coordinate a higher level of coordination and collaboration between the K20 network project and the Gates Foundation grants. The result of this assistance is to ensure a higher level of library participation in these programs and ultimately a greater increase rural Internet access in the state. These projects help to bridge the digital divide that exists in our state.

- **Objective 4:** Increase opportunities for policy makers, stakeholders, and libraries to understand the importance of equity and ease of access to information.

  - Proposed Actions
    Through coordinated programs provide:
    Action 59: Consulting, facilitation, and informational forums.

Action 60: Opportunities to educate policy makers, stakeholders, and library staff on the importance of this goal in providing effective library services in the 21st century.

- <u>Examples of Progress and Results</u>
  *Library Information Technology Working Group (LITWG)*
  LITWG was formed in 1999 to assist WSL and LCW in identifying IT issues and developing possible solutions for libraries of our state. LITWG is composed of 12 members from libraries of varying sizes and locations throughout the state. The members are IT professionals from small, medium, large, public, academic, school, and special libraries in Washington state. Two members are the IT representatives from the LCW. The LITWG meets on a quarterly basis and works with WSL and LCW to identify possible LSTA grant areas and emerging issues and technology.

# Looking to the Future

WSL sought feedback on the programs developed with LSTA funding through a variety of methods. These methods have included surveys, forums, and personal communication.

The 2000 survey of Washington libraries conducted in February and March 2000 netted 225 responses. The survey assessed the provision of WSL services to the Washington library community. What follows is a summary of the responses to questions pertaining to the grant program.

1. **The grants helped us to improve service to patrons.**
   Fifty-five individuals responded to this question. These individuals had been grant applicants. Among these, 71% agreed that LSTA grants helped to improve service to patrons. Only 7% disagreed and 22% did not have an opinion.

   Among library respondents who had applied for a Connectivity grant, public library respondents agreed 100%. A quarter of the academic and special library respondents had no opinion. The negative responses came from school library respondents, 14%. Across all categories, the majority of respondents agreed with the statement.

| Respondent group/ type of response | The library applied for a Connectivity grant | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All grant applicants | Public libraries | School libraries | All other libraries |
| Strongly or somewhat agree | 70.9% | 100.0% | 54.4% | 75.0% |
| Don't know | 21.8% | 0.0% | 31.8% | 25.0% |
| Strongly or somewhat disagree | 7.3% | 0.0% | 13.6% | 0.0% |
| Number of responses | 55 | 15 | 22 | 8 |

2. **How satisfied are you with the spending priorities for federal funds used on statewide projects, grants, and other services provided to libraries?**
   Two hundred sixteen individuals responded to this questions. The majority of respondents expressed that they did not know, 61%. About a third, 34%, indicated satisfaction with the spending priorities. Only 5% indicated dissatisfaction.

   Of the respondents who had applied for a Connectivity grant, public libraries expressed the greatest satisfaction, 73%, or nearly three quarters. About a quarter of the school libraries, 26%, and academic and special libraries, 25%, expressed satisfaction with the setting of priorities. School libraries were more likely to state that they did know, 65%, than other libraries, and academic and special libraries were more likely than other types of libraries to express dissatisfaction, 50%.

| Respondent group/ type of response | The library applied for a Connectivity grant | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All respondents | Public libraries | School libraries | All other libraries |
| Strongly or somewhat agree | 34.3% | 73.4% | 26.0% | 25.0% |
| Don't know | 60.6% | 13.3% | 65.2% | 25.0% |
| Strongly or somewhat disagree | 5.1% | 13.3% | 8.7% | 50.0% |
| Number of responses | 216 | 15 | 23 | 8 |

3. **How can we improve our grants process?**
   A summary of comments by category follows:
   - Process related
     - Keep applications, guidelines, and processes simple
     - Reduce paperwork that needs to be completed by applicants and sub-grantees

   - Deadline related
     - Need longer windows of opportunity to apply for grants
     - Keep away from certain times of year for opening and closing grant cycles
       - Start/close of state and federal fiscal years
       - Beginning/end of the school year
       - During school break
       - Around major conferences at the state, regional, and national level

   - Project/Applicant Eligibility related
     - Types of projects that are eligible are too focused – make grant cycles open to any need of the applicant
     - Offer grants in areas needed by all libraries

   - Notification related
     - Distribute notification more widely
     - More advance notification of upcoming grant cycles is needed
     - Market programs/grants better
     - Continue to send notification by mail
     - Send feedback and award summaries to all applicants
     - List criteria for award of grants in every grant cycle

   - Support and Training related
     - Keep forms available electronically
     - Need to have examples of previously funded projects available for review
     - Need more knowledgeable reviewers with subject expertise related to the grant cycle
     - Need more grant training for all types of libraries. In working with schools consider scheduling this training at Educational Service Districts on in-service days
     - Need a better explanation of what is required within the grant

4. **Indicate where you may need additional support.**
   Two hundred twenty-five individuals responded to this survey item. For all respondents, the top five categories were: 1) technology training, 32%; 2) grant writing/development, 28%; 3) electronic collection development, 27%; 4) reference, 21.8%; and 5) computer troubleshooting, 20%.

   Among those respondents who applied for a Connectivity grant, strong interest was expressed in grant writing/development, 60%; technology training, 42%; and computer troubleshooting, 40%. However, among these respondents, public and school librarians expressed other interest such as developing local support, 27%; children and young adult services, 27%; in addition to electronic collection development, 24%. There was insufficient response from academic and special libraries to discern any pattern of interest.

| Most common answers | | The library applied for a Connectivity grant | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent group/ response | All respondents | All grant applicants | Public libraries | School libraries | All other libraries |
| Technology training | 32.4% | 42.2% | 40.0% | 33.3% | * |
| Grant writing/development | 28.0% | 60.0% | 46.7% | 75.0% | * |
| Electronic collection development | 27.1% | 24.4% | 26.7% | 16.7% | * |
| Reference | 21.8% | 17.8% | 20.0% | 12.5% | * |
| Computer troubleshooting | 20.4% | 40.0% | 40.0% | 37.5% | * |
| Graphics/templates for generic publications | 18.7% | 20.0% | 13.3% | 16.7% | 0.0% |
| Collection development | 17.3% | 20.0% | 0.0% | 29.2% | * |
| Building facility design | 16.0% | 20.0% | 33.3% | 12.5% | 0.0% |
| Developing local library support | 15.6% | 26.7% | 26.7% | 20.8% | * |
| Children/young adult services | 13.3% | 26.7% | 13.3% | 29.2% | * |
| Legal issues | 12.4% | 8.9% | 6.7% | 4.2% | 0.0% |
| GIS | 11.1% | 17.8% | 26.7% | 8.3% | * |
| Working with local government or other authorities | 9.8% | 11.1% | 20.0% | 4.2% | 0.0% |
| Trustee orientation and education | 4.9% | 6.7% | 13.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Facilitation of staffs/boards | 4.4% | 8.9% | 13.3% | 0.0% | * |
| Number of responses | 225 | 45 | 15 | 24 | 8 |

*One or more respondents indicated the need for support in this area. Not enough response to judge overall interest.

Forums were held in October–November 2000 across Washington state in preparation for writing the *Five Year Plan, Designing Our Future, 2002–2007 Statewide Plan for Washington Libraries*. Forums were held in the following locations:
- Edmonds – Sno-Isle Regional Library – Edmonds Branch
- Spokane – Spokane Public Library – Main Library
- Tumwater – Timberland Regional Library – Service Center
- Yakima – Yakima Valley Regional Library – Main Library

Two forums were held by videoconference:
- Eastern Washington Videoconference – Ellensburg, Kennewick, Moses Lake, Wenatchee
- Western Washington Videoconference – Bremerton, Lacey, Mount Vernon, Vancouver

In addition, a survey of library directors was conducted online.  As a result of the survey and forums, the following issues were identified:

Issues with potential solutions:
- Increase remote access to libraries for customers
  - Provide 24/7 access remotely for all types of libraries
  - Provide 24/7 reference
  - Have libraries be 211 call centers
  - Expand Internet availability

- Increase public visibility of libraries through marketing/public relations
  - Research and assess public perceptions
  - Link with Information Literacy effort
  - Develop a marketing campaign with local tie-in
  - Create a Web site, e.g., WAlib.org

- Increase funding and decrease competition for funding
  - Find more equitable support
  - Develop more creative funding, beyond property tax
  - Seek enabling legislation for sales or household tax, etc.

- Provide seamless service to customers despite jurisdictional boundaries
  - Have free ILL statewide as in Oregon
  - Have cooperative agreements for service
  - Have a statewide card
  - Work on protocols to, e.g., search catalogs or make collections available
  - Coordinate services, hours among libraries

- Improve children's services
  - Have training to do outreach, etc.
  - Have full time coordinator
  - Have coordination at a regional level

- Increase electronic resources

- Encourage coordination and collaboration among libraries
  - WSL as catalyst
  - Follow the SDL model
  - Have standard automation for public libraries

- Provide training for staff and address recruitment and retention
  - Provide mentoring
  - Provide distance education, esp. for library technicians
  - Provide centralized training
  - Match local learners with local trainers
  - Use the SDL Project as a model for providing training

- Increase up-to-date technology and access for public
  - Ensure increased speed and access
  - Influence vendors for software that is intuitive and accommodates limitations

- Provide resources and services to meet diversity of communities
  - Have centralized selection/catalog of multi-lingual books
  - Recruit/train staff on diversity
  - Statewide multi-lingual collection

- Continue consortia purchasing, including the SDL Project

- Maintain broad collections – print
  - Provide better access to information through both a physical library and a "virtual" library

- Increase support of school libraries
  - Provide more LSTA funds for collaborative projects
  - Market services to own boards
  - Develop more clout within K-12
  - Increase regional cooperation among library type
  - Legitimization from outside

- Increase information competency of staff and public

- Develop services, facilities, and programs that are responsive to community needs
  - Invite citizens to board meetings for input
  - Work at building community connections
  - Increase parent and community volunteer involvement
  - Reach out and include all parts of the community in library activities

From the implementation of and the discussion on projects, programs, and grants, from our receipt of feedback from various surveys and statewide plan forums, and from review and discussion of the general evaluation report, ideas for lessons learned and future directions were developed.

# Lessons Learned and Future Directions

The process for developing lessons learned and future directions took place in three steps. First, WSL staff brainstormed a listing of lessons learned and recommendations. Then the full LCW reviewed and commented on this listing, striking some, editing others, and adding some of their own. Finally, WSL staff worked with a LCW subcommittee to further refine the lessons learned and recommendations, and to add substance to each taking them from a bullet point to a more descriptive statement.

### Communication – Awareness of LSTA

- <u>Lessons learned:</u> The transition from LSCA to LSTA has further opened federal library funding to all types of libraries. Knowledge of the availability of these funds to small libraries, rural libraries, and non-public libraries has been limited in spite of attempts to widely distribute announcements.

  Messages need to be honed and audiences targeted more precisely for the message to reach its intended target and to be effective. Timing is an important consideration in distributing information to academic and school libraries. Messages need to avoid jargon, be repeated and reinforced. If groups are targeted in the correct manner, they will respond.

  People can't always find the information they need about LSTA funded programs and grants.

  Newer communication technologies are becoming more widely available. While it sometimes seems that these technologies are not effective, it must be remembered that as librarians enter the field, the overall comfort level with new technology will continue to increase. Videoconferencing is one example of new technology that is now more widely available but has not been widely used. It has its place, but project staff need to recognize situations appropriate for its use. A variety of communication technologies must continue to be employed while the use of this or other newer technology continues to be developed.

  - <u>Progress</u>: The mailing of announcements has become more focused over time. As one example, early grant cycles sent materials directly to officials within the superintendent's office at each of the 296 school districts. It was later learned that many school librarians continued to be unaware of these opportunities. The mailing of announcements as part of the latest grant cycles was delivered to each of the approximately 1,800 public school libraries in the state. Announcements throughout this period of time were also distributed to the Washington Library Media Association that represents school libraries/media centers.

  - <u>Recommendation</u>: Continue to find more effective ways to increase marketing and outreach of the grant program to non-public libraries. An internal marketing plan should be developed and consistently used.

    Target academic libraries, special libraries, and small rural public libraries. In addition to grants, increase marketing and outreach about statewide programs and initiatives. WSL staff administering technology grants should promote LSTA opportunities more heavily among rural libraries.

LCW needs to be aggressive and be held accountable for working with their individual constituencies. A handbook should be developed detailing the constituencies for each of the LCW positions.

Targeted e-mails should be used as well as general broadcasts on listserv.

- Recommendation: Staff need to develop a standardized, efficient process to communicate content and technical issues with clients. A template should be developed that can be used by all WSL consultants for posting working documents, reporting on project progress, and publicizing information on the status of projects and timelines.

- Recommendation: Web sites are an important part of consulting and library development. They are no longer just an interesting thing to do. Encourage WSL consulting staff to use Web sites as part of their project management. Ensure that WSL Web pages provide a consistent look and feel through the use of a core set of common elements. At the same time, maintain enough flexibility to allow for pages to be creative and interesting. Web sites should use common, lay terminology and avoid jargon.

Seek means of tracking use of resources including Web site usage. Seek meaningful data, not just data that is easy to get, e.g., hit counts.

- Recommendation: Increase cost-effectiveness of WSL programs and projects. Minimize the number of reports that are printed and distributed. Place reports and other information on the Web for downloading. This will allow WSL to more effectively allocate its resources and will allow those end users that are truly interested in receiving the information access to that information.

- Recommendation: Think carefully about the comfort level of users and the level of technology available to those users in their daily work. Be very selective in the use of videoconferencing or other applications that use newer technology.

**Communication – Responsiveness**
- Lesson learned: Feedback from the library community is needed if LSTA funding is to have the greatest impact possible.

  - Progress: Both the 1997 and 2000 survey of Washington libraries asked a number of questions regarding specific grant cycles and different aspects of the LSTA program in Washington state.

  - Recommendation: Continue to gather feedback on specific characteristics of the LSTA and grants program using focus groups, surveys, and other methods. Refine the program based on the information gathered.

**Community Input**
- Lesson learned: LCW has proven effective in advising the WSLC and the WSL staff and shaping library development in Washington.

  - Recommendation: Continue to use the LCW for library development planning and prioritization of the use federal of LSTA funding in Washington state.

- <u>Lesson learned:</u> Project advisory committees have proven effective in the planning, development, implementation, and oversight of various LSTA funded initiatives.

  - <u>Recommendation</u>: Continue to use the project advisory committees for the planning, development, and oversight of LSTA funded initiatives.

**Customer Service**
- <u>Lesson learned:</u> While much consulting can be done by phone, email, videoconference, and other technological means, face to face contact and personalization of service is still important.

  - <u>Recommendation</u>: Create a balance between the need for consulting and the demands of project management. Develop a clear expectation of the roles of WSL consultants and what is expected in terms of both project management responsibilities and consulting.

**Customer Service – Events and Scheduling**
- <u>Lesson learned:</u> Library staff have a hard time traveling to various training events. Initiatives that brought training programs to many locations across the state were highly valued and appreciated. Staff felt they had more opportunity to attend and could more easily arrange for backup coverage of their library, if needed.

  - <u>Progress</u>: Training and other program activity is provided in a variety of locations across Washington state. Even though an attempt is made in every project to reach many locations across the state, the project budget, availability and cost of trainers, and time constraints all affect success in this regard.

  - <u>Recommendation</u>: Provide programs/initiatives that reach all areas of the state. Programs should be held in as widely dispersed geographical locations as possible.

    Also provide non-project related training to the library community based on needs. The need for all types of training for libraries is important.

**Learning Resources – Availability**
- <u>Lesson learned</u>: One of the useful outputs of many projects is the documentation of "best practices". Availability of this information allows libraries to avoid duplicating much effort. Libraries can build upon each others' efforts and the good work previously completed.

  The development, use, and distribution of "best practices" are important aspects of the successful implementation of new or enhanced library services statewide.

  Project staff, advisory committees, and project partners need to share what is being learned from the implementation of projects. Benefits accrue to libraries that are actively participating on advisory committees or to those that are implementing a project. Other libraries will also benefit from the review of "best practices," "lessons learned," and information about project implementation. This will allow all libraries to see what works and what pitfalls may be avoided.

  - <u>Progress</u>: Initiatives/projects such as Early Learning and Digital Imaging have Web sites that contain "best practice" information. Other projects such as Diversity have the development of "best practices" as one of the objectives of the project. The identification of "best practices" is not a uniform objective of projects at this point in time.

- ▪ Recommendation: The development of "best practices" should be incorporated into all projects that anticipate that they will encounter a significant learning curve to achieve a successful outcome.

- ▪ Progress: Information about projects is made available at a variety of levels but the level of information shared is inconsistent across projects.

- ▪ Recommendation: The information growing out of projects needs to be put online or otherwise made available in a more consistent fashion. Reports and other information need to be available after the project is done. Project staff need to continue to reinforce the "lessons learned" and "best practices" messages by repeating them and getting these messages in front of people using a variety of methods.

  Take time in LCW meetings to share best practices from projects. Invite people from projects and committees speak about projects, best practices, etc.

**Learning Resources – Needs Identification**
- • Lesson learned: Practical continuing education needs are not always being met. Identification of needs provide a common frame of reference.

  - ▪ Recommendation: Develop grants, training, and other events that meet the needs of the library community. Library development personnel should work closely with training personnel. Provide greater coordination of the timing of grants, training, and other events in order not to overwhelm the library community and provide the opportunity for all who want to participate to do so.

    Three actions are proposed. First, implement a program of grant training for library staff. Second, work to prepare libraries and their staff for collaboration with other libraries or with community agencies. Third, train library staff on how to do program evaluation.

**Marketing**
- • Lesson learned: Marketing of LSTA projects is in its infancy. Delivery of services to the end user should always make reference to the WSL as the provider or facilitator and IMLS as the funding source. As audiences are targeted, and statewide training and mentoring of the library grows, LSTA-funded and WSL supported projects and services will become more visible.

  Delivery of services to the end user in a transparent way, where the end user cannot identify the role of WSL in the delivery of the service, may significantly impact the perceived value of WSL.

  - ▪ Progress: Several projects funded through LSTA have been highly visible and highly successful, e.g., The SDL Project and the Find It! Project. These projects have won acclaim from many segments of the library community and the general public. Many supporters both in the library community and the general public have pointed to LSTA projects as a justification for the continuance of the WSL.

  - ▪ Recommendation: The WSL, LCW, and LSTA statewide initiative committee members must effectively promote statewide initiatives/grants and keep the library community and the public aware of these accomplishments and their value.

    LSTA funded projects should carry the "Washington State Library" and "IMLS" brands. This will increase constituency support and help citizens of Washington to comprehend the added value that the agencies implementing these projects bring to the delivery of

information statewide. This should include not only the WSL Web site and other published products but should also include the Web sites and products of the local libraries receiving LSTA funding.

- ▪ Recommendation: Programs need a marketing component in addition to detailed budgets and other project detail. Ultimately, if only the participants know about the program, its impact will be very limited.

- ▪ Recommendation: Each program needs materials developed for use in local library implementation. These templates may be in common to several projects and be linked via each projects Web site. Two examples of such templates are a marketing template and a project implementation/process template.

**Partnerships**
- Lesson learned: Participation in collaboration and consortia are important ways to strengthen libraries and expand purchasing power.

  - ▪ Recommendation: Work to help libraries collaborate with each other. Encourage the formation of consortia to serve small rural libraries. Encourage the formation of consortia across library types.

**Partnerships – Community Partners**
- Lesson learned: The development of community partners is an important way to increase the visibility of the library, knowledge of the wide variety of services available through local libraries, and impact on the community.

  - ▪ Progress: Projects should focus on partnerships among the library community and with community based agencies.

  - ▪ Recommendation: Work to help libraries collaborate with community organizations that have similar interests. Encourage the formation of partnerships to serve targeted constituencies.

  - ▪ Recommendation: Make interagency cooperation a requirement for appropriate grants.

**Partnerships – Involvement In Projects**
- Lesson learned: The involvement of LCW members and interested library staff across the state on statewide initiative advisory committees brings new perspectives, a wider variety of expertise, increased support and more grounding in reality. It provides for project ownership, better guidance, more of a true partnership and increases the connection with numerous people in the library community.

  - ▪ Progress: As of June 2001, thirteen advisory committees were assisting WSL on a variety of projects and issues. These advisory committees were composed of more than 140 members of the Washington library community and others interested in these projects and issues.

  - ▪ Recommendation: Continue to include LCW members and non-library partners on advisory committees. Provide more notification of opportunities for participation. Recruit more broadly. Provide interest form on Web site for people to indicate their willingness to participate on committees or otherwise in projects.

**Planning**

- <u>Lesson learned:</u> It is important to have a proposal process that is flexible enough to address emerging issues. While the process of developing and approving initiatives is successful in gathering ideas from the entire library community, the process starts so far in advance of the date of implementation that is difficult to quickly address new issues, trends, and needs.

    - <u>Progress</u>: The proposal process has been adjusted to more easily allow the development of activities that address newly identified high priority issues of the library community. Introduction of "out-of-cycle" proposals is now allowed with the sponsorship of a LCW member. Recommendation for approval of the "out-of-cycle" proposal is dependent on the availability of LSTA funding and the approval of the WSLC.

    - <u>Recommendation</u>: Better document the "out-of-cycle" proposal process and the steps for acceptance of this type of proposal and the review of these proposals.

- <u>Lesson learned:</u> It is important that there be a plan in place that acts as a guide to the future. The plan acts as a blueprint from which the WSL works with the Washington library community to achieve common goals.

    - <u>Progress</u>: The proposal process requires the proposal document to identify the relationship to Statewide Planning. Most individual grant cycles also incorporate an application question that ask about the relation of the proposed project to local planning and Statewide Planning.

    - <u>Recommendation</u>: The Five-Year Plan needs to be more focused than the previous plan. Use the amendment process to keep current with emerging trends and issues. Looking forward and recognizing trends and upcoming issues is an important part of the effective implementation of this strategy. Keywords for development of the new Five-Year Plan should be focus, demonstration of progress, impact, and accountability.

    - <u>Recommendation</u>: There should be a greater connection between goals and strategies identified in the Statewide Plan/LSTA Five-Year Plan and the work of the WSL and the LCW. In working with LCW, the WSL should use the Statewide Plan as a guide. Recommend greater use of the plan and a better tie in as evaluation of proposals occur. The plan should provide the desired outcome and as such, the yardstick for how we measure progress.

- <u>Lesson learned:</u> Identification of trends and future issues (horizon scanning) is important for the wise use of funds. This role is inclusive of the WSLC, LCW, and WSL staff.

    - <u>Recommendation</u>: Continue to monitor trends in the library community.

**Administrative – Determination of Needs**

- <u>Lesson learned:</u> Doing a needs assessment prior to project implementation is an important step in developing a successful project.

    - <u>Recommendation</u>: Limit or better coordinate surveys of the library community so that the library community is not over-saturated with requests for feedback on various projects and tasks.

        Seek effective means of assessing the needs of the library community and follow through with appropriate training. Piggyback on the needs assessment work of other agencies/organizations (their surveys, etc). Develop better methodologies to get the

information and feedback that WSL staff and advisory committees need. Seek alternatives to surveys, such as focus groups.

**Administrative – Project Development**
- <u>Lesson learned</u>: Significant value accrues when consistent methods and processes for project management are employed.

  - <u>Recommendation</u>: Processes, resources and tools should be shared among project managers, committees and others to keep project related logistics moving quickly and effectively.

**Administrative – Project Tracking**
- <u>Lesson learned</u>: Better tracking of projects and collection of information results in initiatives and projects that can be marketed and reported in a more effective manner.

  - <u>Progress</u>: Some initial efforts have been made to address this lesson learned.

  - <u>Recommendation</u>: A more consistent and coordinated process with tools/templates should be developed. Project results and outcomes should also be more thoroughly identified during project implementation.

    Collection of information in electronic format allows easier manipulation of the information and reduces duplicative data entry into documents, spreadsheets and databases.

**Administrative – Project Identification**
- <u>Lesson learned</u>: Most projects are composed of several distinctive phases each requiring the oversight and involvement of WSL personnel. Many small projects spread staff resources thinly and reduce the ability of the staff to respond to issues that arise. The ability of the staff to take on other projects such as library consulting also becomes constricted.

  - <u>Progress</u>: LCW and the WSL Consultants Team work together to find a balance between worthy large and small projects so that projects can be staffed adequately.

  - <u>Recommendation:</u> Projects should be larger both in scope and in funding in order to have greater benefit to broad sections of the population. These projects should have as their foundation an underlying collaboration between many segments of the library community and of society.

    Workloads need to be balanced such that assigned staff is in a position to manage the project effectively. At a minimum, WSL staff act as a project liaison assuring the interests of the state and that the requirements assumed with the acceptance of federal funding are followed.

- <u>Lesson learned</u>: It is very difficult to keep aware of the needs of the unserved and the underserved population of the state. General consulting with individuals and libraries is an important way to maintain awareness of these needs.

  - <u>Recommendation</u>: Consulting staff need to spend more time in general library development through consulting with libraries, doing evaluations and reports, and horizon scanning. One issue that needs additional discussion is how to best address the issue of meeting the need for library services in areas not yet served or which are greatly underserved. The formation of new libraries/partial library districts and any roles for WSL should be one part of this discussion**.**

**Administrative – Project Administration**

- Lesson learned: Problems with effective communication and logistical support can occur with off-site project managers.

    - Recommendation: Limit the use of off-site WSL employees to the minimum essential to complete critical time-sensitive tasks.

- Lesson learned: Under the present structure, each project manager has been required to learn all aspects of project management. There is a steep learning curve for such tasks as issuing "request for proposals" and writing contracts. Project managers also spend considerable time doing lower level tasks. These tasks interfere with the project manager's focus on the content of the project.

    - Progress: A special projects manager position within WSL has been developed to more effectively coordinate and support projects.

    - Recommendation: Develop models for how to develop, manage, complete, monitor, and evaluate various tasks.

        Consider hiring an administrative support person to handle lower level tasks such as the processing of travel reimbursements.

The next section of the evaluation report was produced by the Information School at the University of Washington. This part of the report describes in detail the impact upon libraries and the geographic distribution of LSTA funding and grant awards throughout the state.

### Evaluation of Washington State Library's LSTA Five-Year Plan and Implementation Activities

The *Evaluation of Washington State Library's LSTA Five-Year Plan and Implementation Activities* report that follows discusses implementation activities in relation to the LSTA Five-Year Plan at the goal level. The report provides an overview of many of the programs conducted and focuses more closely on the Connectivity program and the SDL program. The two programs were selected for a closer look for three reasons. First, these programs were conducted over several years and were a primary focus for LSTA during that time period. Second, these programs received significant portions of LSTA funding during that time period. Third, these programs had substantial impact on libraries within Washington state.